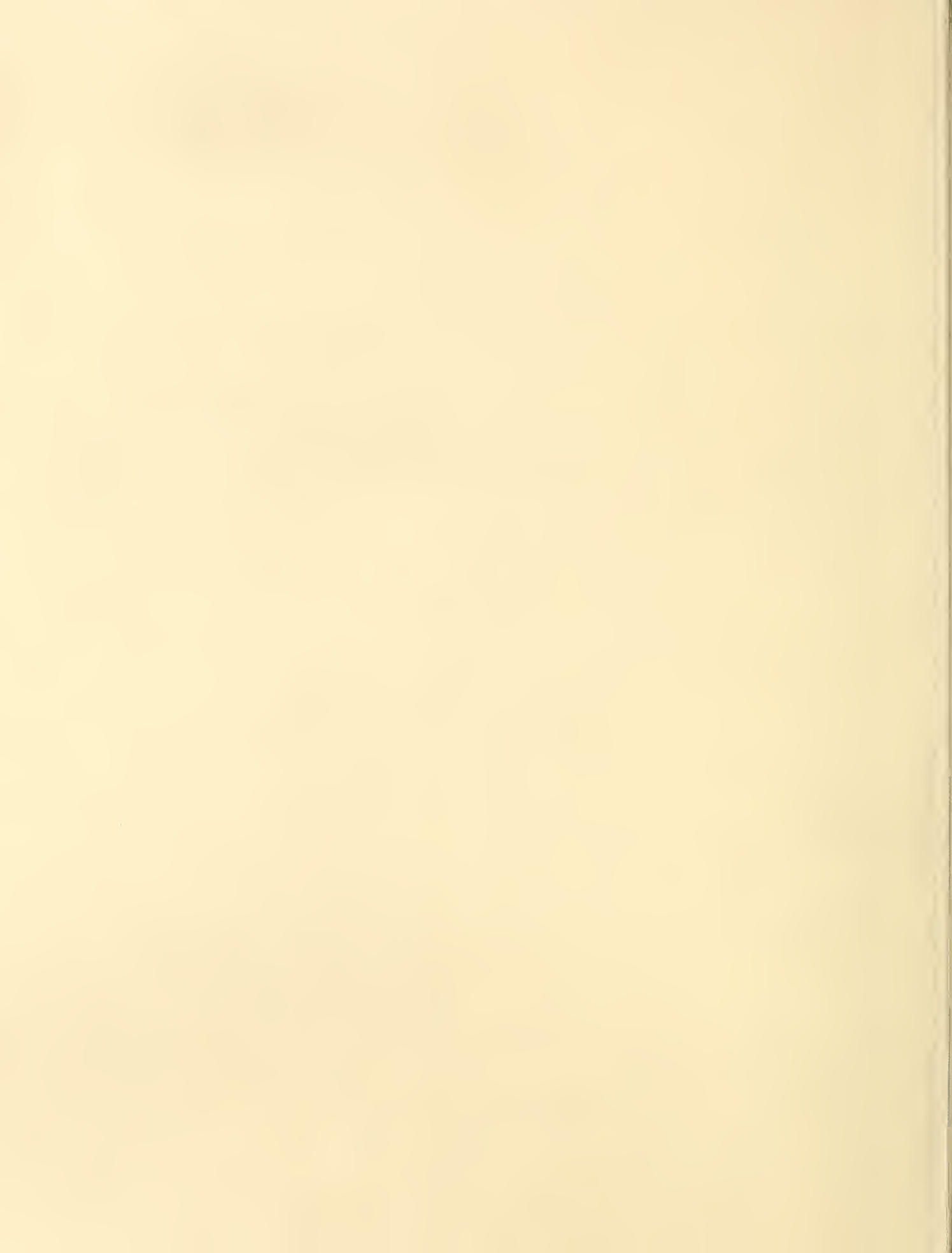


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HOUSEHOLD CALENDAR

Tomatoes - the Easiest Vegetable to Can at Home

An interview between Miss Ruth Van Deman and Miss Mabel C. Stienbarger, Bureau of Home Economics, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast by a network of 48 associate NBC stations, Thursday, August 3, 1933.

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MISS VAN DEMAN: How do you do, Everybody, and especially all of you who have written me in these last two months that the Household Calendar has been off the air. Of course you all know the reason why. The Agricultural Adjustment Administration had much to say about its new policies and its wheat, cotton, and tobacco campaigns, also the marketing agreements. To make way for this important news, your old friends of the Farm and Home Hour were glad to step aside for the time being.

Now we're back again, and from week to week I'm going to give you suggestions in line with the big economic program for national recovery. Don't be alarmed, I'm not going to suggest a code for the housekeeping business, even though when we get right down to it housekeeping is about the most important business of all. We'll talk very often about the live-at-home program that so many farm families are adopting, and how they fit with the program of agricultural adjustment. And by the way, when you come across a particularly good idea in a live-at-home program, let me have it so I can pass it along.

One of the features of the live-at-home program for farm families in many States is carefully planned food budgets and food preservation budgets. These budgets show just how many quarts and pounds of each kind of food a family needs to raise and put up for the winter months in order to make sure of a well-balanced diet the year around. The idea behind these budgets isn't just to provide enough food to keep people from being hungry. It is far more than that. It's to provide the kinds and quantities of food for good nutrition. That's where these modern food budgets are a long way ahead of the plans our grandmothers used to make for stocking up the cellar and the attic with food supplies for winter. Oftentimes they did the right thing by instinct. But they simply didn't have a background of scientific facts on nutrition to guide them, as we have.

Today, I've brought Mabel Stienbarger along with me. You've heard Miss Stienbarger many times before on canning and other methods of food preservation. All through this hot weather she's been going ahead with her experiments in canning and drying the different vegetables and fruits, checking up on methods and trying to find the simplest and the safest way to keep each one.

We've decided to concentrate on tomatoes today, for several reasons. First, this is the height of the tomato season in many gardens. Second, tomatoes are near the head of the list in vitamin values; they rank high among the "protective" foods. Every food budget calls for tomatoes, regardless of how much money there is to spend. And canned tomatoes are of special importance in the low-cost diet and in relief rations. Word comes to us that many of the community canneries now working to conserve all the food possible for relief use next winter are putting up more tomatoes than any other one food. And last,

(over)

Miss Stienbarger, I'm sure you'll want to add that tomatoes are the easiest of all vegetables to can at home.

MISS STIENBARGER: Yes, I've certainly found them so. I class tomatoes with fruits when it comes to canning. They are acid, and they are juicy. They hold their color and their flavor through the heat of processing and afterward in storage.

But to go back to the food budget for a moment, how many canned tomatoes are on the list, Miss Van Deman?

MISS VAN DEMAN: Well that depends on what part of the country you are talking about and how long fresh tomatoes last in the garden. Also it depends on how much citrus fruit the family uses. The nutrition people class oranges, and grapefruit, and other citrus fruits with tomatoes in the food budget. In a liberal diet they recommend a serving of citrus fruits or of tomatoes every day. With fresh tomatoes out of season let's say four months in the year, and serving canned tomatoes in some form about three times a week, this would mean providing about a pint of canned tomatoes each week for each member of the family. Or 16 to 20 quarts per person for the eight winter months. This is a generous allowance, as I said, but why not be generous if we can with a food so important to good nutrition.

Now about canning methods, Miss Stienbarger, what is the first important step?

MISS STEINBARGER: To get good firm ripe tomatoes, I'd say. The quality of the fresh tomatoes has a great deal to do with the quality of the canned tomatoes. More than lots of people seem to think.

Then after you've selected good firm ripe tomatoes, scald them, plunge them for a second into cold water, and peel them. While you are peeling, save the juice that drips down and use it to fill up the jars.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Do you recommend the cold pack or the hot pack for tomatoes?

MISS STIENBARGER: I prefer the hot-pack method in canning tomatoes and almost everything else. When you heat the tomatoes to boiling and pack them hot into the containers before processing, you save in several ways. For one thing, the heating shrinks the tomatoes and drives out air, and you can get more tomatoes into each container than when you pack them perfectly raw and cold. If you are using tin cans, you seal them right up, and cut out the step called "the exhaust. Also when you put the hot-pack containers into the hot canner, they do not cool it down. Very soon the water bath is boiling and you can begin to count time for the processing period.

MISS VAN DEMAN: You always process tomatoes in the water-bath, then.

MISS STIENBARGER: Yes, always. The temperature of the pressure cooker is too high for tomatoes. It overcooks them and spoils the flavor. As I said, tomatoes are acid and juicy and therefore it is easy to sterilize them at the temperature of boiling water, 212°F.

MISS VAN DEMAN: How long do you process hot-packed tomatoes in the boiling water bath?

MISS STIENBARGER: Just 5 minutes, whether the containers are glass jars or tin cans. But with the cold pack it is quite another story. With glass jars of cold-packed tomatoes, in order to be safe, we've found it necessary to allow 45 minutes, and with tin cans 35 minutes.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Well, the hot-pack certainly does cut down processing time on tomatoes. Will you be willing, Miss Stienbarger, to answer questions about canning if anybody wants to write in?

MISS STIENBARGER: Yes, indeed. The Bureau of Home Economics is ready to give every help it can on food conservation this year. I'll do my best to answer every question that comes.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Thank you, Miss Stienbarger, for all this help, present and to come.

By the way, Everybody, have you asked your State College of Agriculture for a canning budget to suit your region? Many States have them, I know.

Goodbye, for this time.

